

Proposed Minutes
Friend of the Court Bureau
Advisory Committee Meeting
State Court Administrative Office, Lansing, MI
Friday, February 22, 2008

MEMBERS PRESENT: Doug Howard, Peter Dever, Numa Cabrera, Karyn Ferrick
Lisa Truscott, and Dan Bauer

MEMBERS ABSENT: Shawn Perry and Zenell Brown

STAFF PRESENT: Angel Sorrells

EX-OFFICIO: Jules Hanslovsky, Suzanne Hoseth, and Lynn Bullard

1. Call Meeting to Order

The meeting was called to order at 1:00 p.m.

2. Routine Business

a. Approval of the October 26

Minutes a motion was made by Mr. Dever to approve the Minutes as submitted. Motion passed unanimously.

3. Public Comment – None.

4. Correspondence – None.

5. New Business

a. Grievance Audit Update

The Committee had requested at the last meeting that this was something that they would be interested in seeing what happened, and what the statistics look like. A handout was provided to the Committee listing county wide grievances received from 2006 – 2007. The Committee discussed if there were any similar trends in the grievances, and if there was a way to track to these trends. The FOCB provides an annual report to the legislature, and the Committee will be provided with a link to view this grievance report to the legislature. These are grievances that are formally filed with the friend of the court.

It appears that the grievances filed seem to be declining. With the advancement of MiCSES, it has eliminated many of the grievances that many friend of the court offices receive. The friend of the court bureau does a

annual grievance report to the legislature providing a more in depth breakdown of categories for review.

Mr. Hanslovsky stressed the importance of keeping the grievance process available so that it can be used as a mechanism for litigants. Ms. Hoseth also stated that the chief judge is required to publish an annual review of the friend of the court in the paper, which also provides an opportunity for meaningful input from the community.

6. Old Business

a. Parenting Time Guidelines

At the last few meetings, the committee discussed the concerns around the consistency and application of parenting time guidelines, and if they are modernized. Ms. Perry had previously requested that the FOCB potentially consider doing a statewide survey asking all FOCs to submit their parenting time plans so that we could evaluate them. Upon further investigation, this was completed in 2002, which was funded by a federal grant, which is no longer in existence. Tim Cole, a management analyst in the Bureau informed the committee that back in 2002 the Bureau sent out a questionnaire to all the FOCs about their parenting time and make-up parenting time schedule. Upon completing that survey, they were also asked to provide their make-up time policy and if they have a local parenting time policy. The SCAO developed a Michigan Parenting Time Guideline provided by the Access and Visitation federal grant. It goes into detail about what is considered a holiday, weekend, summer vacation, and it also goes into depth about therapeutic parenting time, and supervised parenting time. Many counties referred to this when they were developing their local parenting time guideline. The purpose was to make sure that each county had a parenting time and make-up parenting time policy. Currently, there is no statute requirement that FOCs have a parenting time guideline in writing.

Mr. Hanslovsky commented that most FOCs have their own guidelines they follow, and that the SCAO should place a disclaimer on the website that this is not law, but a guideline, and that they must consult with their local FOC office regarding their parenting time guidelines. Ms. Sorrells will implement this on the website. Also that web links are provided to the counties that have a parenting time guidelines. Mr. Hanslovsky believes it is extraordinarily important that a consistent model be followed by all the FOCs in the state of Michigan.

a. Bylaws

The Bureau has provided the Committee with a charter that would, if adopted, replace the bylaws. A motion was made by Mr. Dever and seconded by Ms. Ferrick to rescind the bylaws, adopt the charter, and publish the charter in place of the bylaws on the website. **Motion passed unanimously.**

7. Hot Topics

The Bureau provided the Committee with the legislative and policy issues that they will review for comments and recommendations to the Bureau.

An updated Committee list will be provided to the Committee via e-mail.

8. Closing

- a. Members Closing Comments – None.
- b. Final Public Comment
- c. Adjourn – Meeting adjourned at 1:50 p.m.
- d. Next Meeting Date is **May 9, 2008 at 1:00 p.m.**